



News from the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet
LaJuana S. Wilcher, Secretary

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OPERATION BLUEBIRD TAKES FLIGHT AT COVE SPRINGS PARK

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 19, 2004) – Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet (EPPC) Secretary LaJuana S. Wilcher joined Department of Public Protection (DPP) Commissioner Jim Adams today to install one of 12 bluebird boxes at Cove Springs Park to help launch “Operation Bluebird” as part of the EPPC’s Earth Day celebration.

Employees from the DPP created “Operation Bluebird” to help attract bluebirds to the park. There is a nationwide effort underway to help bring the bluebird back to nesting sites across the nation. Housing and industrial developments have destroyed trees and old wooden fence posts, which traditionally served as bluebird housing. In addition to the growing lack of housing, aggressive starlings and sparrows have chased away the timid bluebirds to such a degree that their numbers have decreased dramatically in Kentucky and throughout the United States.

DPP employees built the cedar bluebird boxes and mounted them on metal posts 400 yards apart facing east as recommended by bluebird experts. Employees will monitor the boxes to ensure that only bluebirds nest there and they plan to install more boxes at the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resource’s Salato Center in Frankfort.

“Operation Bluebird” is a lasting project that will increase the bluebird population and give our employees an opportunity to participate and feel like they are making a difference on Earth Day,” said Commissioner Adams.

This is the first time a statewide Earth Day campaign has been organized by state government. Spearheaded by the EPPC, the various cabinets have organized environmental related activities throughout the month of April.

“We in state government have a special responsibility to be good stewards of Kentucky's air, water and land,” said Secretary Wilcher. “Earth day is an opportunity for state government agencies to review their practices and take action to make Kentucky a better place to live, work and play.”

Among the activities planned are family hikes, state government open houses, public library displays, *Read to Achieve* Earth Day readings, as well as tree planting and water testing events. Earth Day is April 22. For additional information on these activities and many others please refer to the state’s comprehensive Earth Day Web site at environment.ky.gov/earthday.



Volunteers for “Operation Bluebird” listen to remarks by Secretary LaJuana S. Wilcher and Commissioner Jim Adams.



Commissioner Jim Adams explains how “Operation Bluebird” was created.



Secretary LaJuana S. Wilcher and Commissioner Jim Adams successfully install a bluebird box at Cove Springs Park.



Secretary LaJuana S. Wilcher thanks and commends “Operation Bluebird” volunteers.